

March 14, 2013

RE: SB 869 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE
BOARD OF REGENTS

Good afternoon Madame Chair Bye, Madame Chair Willis ,Senators Cassano and Boucher, Representatives Willis, Haddad, and LeGeyt, and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. Today I'd like to testify in support of, and suggest substitute language to SB 869, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS. My name is Alex Tettey Jr. I'm a student at Manchester Community College, former student body President of MCC's Student Government Association, and (Formerly) the Chairman of the Student Advisory Committee to the Board of Regents, and one of two elected students on the CT Board of Regents for Higher Education. Currently, there exists a vacancy in those two positions I once held. The primary purpose of my testimony is to address why this vacancy came to be, and propose a change to this bill to ensure that particular situation wouldn't occur in the future.

CT General Statute 10a-3 is the legislation that outlines and creates the Board of Regents Student Advisory Committee. As written, the statute states, "If any member (of the Student Advisory Committee) ceases to be a matriculating student in good standing, either as a full-time

or part-time undergraduate or graduate student at the institution within the constituent unit system that elected such student, the membership of such student shall terminate.” I as Chairman, the Vice-Chair, and the students currently serving on the committee interpreted the intent of this line is to ensure a college or university was being represented by one of their own, a student. However the phrase “matriculating student in good standing” presents an issue for some community college students. Unlike the four year institutions some of our community colleges hold semesters that begin later than when the traditional semesters being in Fall and Spring. For example, MCC holds two acceleration sessions in the spring, one beginning in February and another beginning in late March. These sessions allow students the flexibility to still take classes in spite of having other obligations such as, childcare, or working a full time job.

This Spring, due to my desire to improve the less than desirable financial situation I was in, I choose to seek full time employment and then register for an accelerated session that would work with my employment schedule. I then found employment and chose to attend an accelerated semester beginning March 25th. In the middle of February, I was informed that because I was not a currently matriculated student, I was in violation of the statute and my membership on the Board of Regents and Student Advisory Committee would terminate. Because I thoroughly enjoy serving and advocating on behalf of my fellow students, I was upset by this news. Fortunately, I did enroll not long after I was removed.

Now that I am currently matriculated student I’m eligible to be re-elected to the position I once held. As I mentioned earlier, myself and the students on the committee don’t feel the

intent of the law is to remove a currently serving student. For that reason, I'd like to propose that "matriculating" be deleted from the legislation. This would ensure that students from community colleges that may not be matriculated at the start of the traditional semester but, become matriculated later in that same semester due to the community college's practice of having accelerated or shortened semesters in order to accommodate a greater number of students are not disqualified from serving on the committee and representing their fellow students. Again, thank you for this opportunity to speak here today and I'd be more than happy to answer questions or clarify any part of my testimony.

Alex Tettey Jr.

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